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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#) [GG](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: RUSSIA WANTS TO CONTINUE COOPERATION ON AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. MOSCOW 1868  
[1](#)B. STATE 93225  
[1](#)C. MOSCOW 1927

Classified By: Political M/C Alice G. Wells for reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) MFA Afghan Desk Chief Yuri Kholkhov told us on September 5 that the GOR wanted to continue cooperating with the U.S. and NATO on achieving stability in Afghanistan, an issue that was too important to be sidetracked by tensions over Georgia. Kholkhov explained that there was a consensus within the GOR on supporting NATO's mission in Afghanistan, but said that he could not predict the future of such sentiment on the Russian side should U.S.-Russia relations "take a turn for the worse." Most Russian officials did not want to see a further deterioration in relations, but there were "hard-liners" who could use whatever punitive measures Washington might decide to take against Moscow as an excuse to derail any chance of cooperation on Afghanistan or other issues.

[1](#)2. (C) Kholkhov said that the ISAF transit agreement would remain in force, despite press reports that Russian Ambassador to NATO Rogozin and Ambassador to Afghanistan Kabulov said that the agreement should be nullified. Kholkhov also said that the Russian offer to provide military assistance to the Afghan National Army (ANA) was still on the table, and asked that the U.S. consider the GOR's standing request to send a small delegation to Washington in September. The GOR would like the meeting agenda to include the details of the military aid package, discussion of a Russian role in the rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Soviet-era infrastructure, and provide the GOR an opportunity to present its concern with Afghanistan's political reconciliation process and upcoming elections (ref A).

[1](#)3. (C) We provided the non-paper on expanding the size of the ANA to Kholkhov, who reiterated that Russia supported this goal (refs B and C). He asked if the proposed multi-donor trust fund to support funding for sustainment of the ANA could be used to finance arms purchases, which would dovetail with the Russian proposal for a percentage of the arms the GOR would send the ANA to be provided through commercial transactions (ref A).  
BEYRLE